

Ultrasound of the Pelvic Area

What is an ultrasound of the pelvic area?

An ultrasound (also called a sonogram) of the pelvic area can find problems with the ovaries and uterus. Ultrasound is sound that has a higher pitch than humans can hear. When it is sent into the body, through a special instrument called a transducer, the sound reflects off internal organs. The organs can then be seen on a screen. Ultrasound does not use x-rays.

How is this type of ultrasound done?

It is done by a doctor and a technologist. There are two ways to do ultrasound of the pelvic area:

- Abdominal
- Transvaginal

In ***abdominal*** ultrasound a small amount of gel is put on the skin of your lower abdomen. This helps insure that the images seen on the screen are clear. Then the transducer slides over your skin to get a wide view of the pelvic area.

In ***transvaginal*** ultrasound a special oblong transducer is inserted into the vagina. This lets the transducer get closer to the area being examined.

What type will I have?

It depends on the reason for the ultrasound. The doctor interpreting the ultrasound decides which type will give the best results. In some cases both types are done. Each type has its own advantages.

What do I need to do to get ready?

First you will have an ***abdominal*** ultrasound. You must have a full bladder when you come in for the test. A full bladder pushes the bowel out of the way so the pelvic organs can be seen.

Drink about 48 ounces of liquids (six, eight ounce glasses) one hour before the exam and do not go to the bathroom. You can go to the bathroom as soon as the exam is finished.

If you are also having a ***transvaginal*** ultrasound, you can empty your bladder ***after*** the abdominal ultrasound. You do not need to have a full bladder for the transvaginal ultrasound.

The nurse in the Women's Clinic will go over these instructions with you before the ultrasound. Call the Clinic at (612) 725-2030 and talk to the nurse if you have any questions before the exam.

What happens during the exam?

You may be asked to take off your clothes from the waist down, so wear clothes that are easy to remove.

You will lie on your back on an examination table. A pillow or towels may be used to raise your pelvis

If you are having a transvaginal ultrasound, a probe will be inserted into your vagina. You may insert the probe if you prefer. Please tell the doctor or technician if you have an allergy to latex because the vaginal probe covers are latex based.

The exam is done and monitored by technologists and a doctor.

How will I get the results of the exam?

You will get the results of your ultrasound in the mail or at your follow-up appointment.

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VA Medical Center
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